

DEWAN'S REPLY: അടുത്തകാലംമുതൽ ശ്രീമൂലം പ്രജാസഭയുടെ സ്മൃതി മെമ്പർ മാരെ തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കുന്നതിനുള്ള അധികാരം കൂടിക്കൊടുത്തിട്ടുണ്ട്. അതുകൊണ്ട് നിങ്ങളുടെ സമുദായത്തിലുള്ള സ്ത്രീകൾക്കു പ്രവേശനം ശരിയായി കിട്ടുമോ എന്നു നിങ്ങൾ സംശയിക്കുന്നുണ്ടായി. എന്നാൽ അങ്ങിനെ വരികയാണെങ്കിൽ ഗവണ്മെൻറു നാമിനേഷൻ നടത്തുന്ന സമയത്തു ആലോചിക്കാം.

നിങ്ങൾ മഹാരാണിറീജൻറു തിരുമനസ്സിലെ നേക്കു പ്രകടിപ്പിച്ച പ്രകൃതജ്ഞതയേയും രാജഭക്തിയേയും ഞാൻ തിരുമനസ്സറിയിക്കാം.

[You fear that Ezhava women may fail to secure election to the Assembly. Government will consider the question when nominations are made. I shall convey to Her Highness the Maha Rani Regent the feelings of loyalty and gratitude that you gave expression to.]

190. Public service, its defects and remedies therefor.

MR. A. R. RAMAN PILLAI (*Parur taluk*), speaking in Malayalam, said that, though he deplored that public service in the State had degenerated on account of the unhealthy competition and communal rivalry exhibited by the various communities and sub-communities, in the scramble for offices, he could not but point out that the claims of Nairs in the matter had been completely overlooked. The member then cited some instances of Nair officers who were denied due encouragement and had to suffer consequently.

The principle of communal representation should not be accepted in the matter of promotion of Government officers. Service and efficiency should be the criterion.

The present Government had a peculiar liking for creating unnecessary appointments. The appointment of personal assistants to many of the Heads of Departments was unnecessary. The pay of the officers who required personal assistants should be reduced. Most of the officers in service were irresponsible. Their behaviour towards the public was far from satisfactory.

The Government did not care to comply with the wishes of the people; they had a peculiar knack to do just the opposite of what was required by the public. When the abolition of toll gates was insisted on, more toll gates were established. When the Medical Board was recommended to be abolished, the Ayurveda Board was also constituted. The Legislative Council passed a resolution that only an Indian should be appointed as the Director of Public Instruction and immediately the Government dispensed with the services of the Indian Director and imported a European to fill the place. The people represented about the necessity for the establishment of a dispensary at Edapally and the matter was urged both in the Assembly and in the Council. But the Government abolished a grant-in-aid *Vaidyasala* which was in existence at the place. Such instances were numerous.

The Dewan should always be a son of the soil. It was gratifying that the present Head of the Administration was a Travancorean. That policy should be continued in future appointments also.

The policy of appointing foreigners in the State service was undesirable and should be stopped. There were capable men in the country to hold any appointment in the State service.

The Government should take notice of what the newspapers said about Government officers and prompt action should be taken against such officers after making the necessary enquiries.

The minimum pay of a Government servant should be fixed at not less than Rs. 10 per mensem. The pay of the subordinate ranks in all the departments was very low, while the officers of the higher rank were highly paid. The pay of the high officers should be reduced by 20 per cent. and the low pay of the Police constables, the Anchal peons, the Revenue peons, etc., should be enhanced.

Some of the officers reserved to themselves the powers conferred by the Government on their subordinates, in the matter of appointments, etc. That practice was seen in most of the departments, especially in the Forest, Excise and Education Departments. Such a state of affairs was quite undesirable and should be remedied at an early date.

It was gratifying that the Government had now appointed as the Land Revenue Commissioner, a Travancorean who had very long experience in the Revenue Department and who was quite efficient. The policy should be continued in future also. There was no proper Land Revenue Report in the State. Hence the present Land Revenue Commissioner should be deputed to compile such a manual. The Division Assistants should be promoted as Dewan Peishkars. The Dewan Peishkar was the District Magistrate also. Hence the Division Assistants who had experience both in criminal and revenue work should be preferred for the place. It was not desirable to promote the Co-operative Registrars as Dewan Peishkars.

The pay of the *pakuthi* officers was very low, while their work was very heavy. The pay of the *Preverthikars* should be enhanced and fixed at Rs. 25 to Rs. 40, of the Accountants at Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 and of the *pakuthi* peons at Rs. 12 to Rs. 15. Corruption was rampant among the lower ranks in the Revenue Department. This evil should be remedied. The Government had proposed to assign away the lands on both the sides of the Pallivasal-Neriamangalam road. It would appear that the K. D. H. P. Company had applied for the registry of the lands. The lands should not be given to foreigners but should be registered only in the names of Travancoreans, and that not more than 10 acres to each applicant. In the case of lands assigned to the K. D. H. P. Company, there was a serious irregularity in Government levying assessment only on lands brought under cultivation. The whole

land assigned to the Company should be assessed or the Government should take back the unassessed lands and assign them to others and levy full assessment.

The representatives of the people, both in the Assembly and in the Legislative Council, had urged on the Government the necessity of appointing an Indian as the Director of Public Instruction. But the Indian Director had been substituted by a European officer. On the expiry of the term of the present Director, an Indian, proficient in Malayalam, should be appointed as the Director. At least 10 per cent. of the vacancies in departmental schools should be given to the teachers of grant-in-aid schools. Further, the Provident Fund system should be introduced for the benefit of such teachers. A Travancorean, proficient in Malayalam, should be appointed as the Inspectress of Girls' Schools. The present Inspectress was quite inefficient. A more efficient Inspectress be appointed. Certain managers of grant-in-aid schools appointed as teachers only their own caste-men. That was an undesirable practice and should be checked. The Cochin Government provided for the stopping of the grants of schools in which such a practice existed. There should be such a rule in Travancore also. As in Cochin, the members of the Legislative Council and the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly should be empowered to visit schools and record their opinion regarding the working of the institutions. Many of the school buildings in the State were in a dilapidated condition and in disrepair. A committee should be appointed with a non-official majority, consisting of some members of the Assembly also, to investigate into the condition of school buildings and to submit a list of buildings to be constructed in the order of urgency. A specific number of buildings should be reconstructed every year according to the above list.

Corruption in the Police Department was increasing from day to day. The part played by the Police in the temperance movement question was quite scandalous. Better educated men should be recruited as Police Constables. Their pay should be enhanced and fixed at Rs. 12 to Rs. 15. The motor traffic control by the department was not efficient. Over-loading was quite common. With a view to avoid the evil, Visitor's books should be kept in each checking station. There was much delay in issuing licence, permit, etc. to the buses. That should be remedied.

At present there was no principle in the appointment of assessors under the Nayar Regulation, to each Munsiff's Court. They should be elected and not nominated as at present. All Nayars, both males and females, who paid land tax should be declared eligible to vote for the election of the assessors.

The Judicial officers, especially the clerical staff of the department, should not be retained in one place for more than two years. They should be transferred at least once in two years. Many vagaries were committed in the Judicial Department and prompt action was not being

taken by the authorities in enquiring about them even when they were brought to notice. The method adopted in conducting enquiries regarding complaints against Judicial officers was undesirable. The District Judges should have complete control over the Munsiffs' Courts as in Cochin and British India and the High Court should not appropriate all the powers to themselves. The pay of the Munsiffs and the Magistrates should be enhanced. The pay of the latter should be at least Rs. 150 to Rs. 200. A constable should be allowed to each Magistrate, for his personal safety, as was formerly done.

There was much delay in filling up the vacancies in the High Court. That should be avoided. The rule that there should be always three Marumakkathayi Judges in the High Court should be strictly adhered to. Three more Judges should be appointed in the High Court to clear the arrears. The Chief Justice should be exempted from hearing cases and he must be entrusted with administrative work alone, including the inspection of courts. He should inspect all the courts in the State at least twice a year. That would remove the corruption in courts.

The Medical Board should be abolished and a Darbar Physician should be appointed as the Head of the Medical Department. An Indian only should be appointed to the place and not a foreigner.

The pay of the Anchal peons was very low. They had to deposit Rs. 100 as security. In Cochin and in British Postal service their lot was much better. The reorganisation of the department ended with the revision of the pay of the Anchal Masters. The pay of the peons should be enhanced and fixed at Rs. 15 to Rs. 18 per mensem.

The present Conservator of Forests was inefficient and irresponsible. Many vagaries were committed in the giving of contracts. Numerous instances could be quoted but for want of time. The rule that timber should not be sold to the near relatives of the departmental contractors at the tariff rates for commercial purposes, was not at all observed. So also the rule regarding grant of timber to Travancoreans for purpose of constructing buildings at three-fourths of the tariff rate, was not properly adhered to.

The proposal to constitute the Ayurveda Board should be given up.

Industrial Inspectors should be appointed in each taluk for the encouragement of industries in the State. But it was doubtful whether it would be of any use under the present Director of Industries. A more efficient officer should be appointed as the Director of Industries.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Raman Pillai, I regret the necessity to which I was put for curtailing your representations. You must have noticed that, in the course of this session, I have not been very strictly insisting upon the 15 minutes' rule, because when I found that any member had useful suggestions to make or actual

grievances to represent. I have allowed a little more time. But in no case was anybody allowed to take more than half an hour for his representations. At an early stage of this Session, I suggested the desirability of members confining the representation to the Assembly to a few of the subjects that they had included in the list which they considered to be most important. Yours is one instance of the disadvantage of having too many irons in the fire. You have such an unwieldy number of subjects in the list that you find it difficult, if not impossible, to bring your representations on these subjects within a period of thirty minutes, let alone fifteen. It is a disadvantage for every body. I for one, might say that I am always ready, willing and anxious to hear the reasons which any member may have to give in support of the suggestion which he makes for the consideration of Government. But that has become impossible in this case. You could merely repeat the enumeration of the points which have been mentioned in the list already. All the same, I may assure you that the suggestions that have been made in your representation will be considered by Government.

You said in certain cases you could not give specific instances because you had not sufficient time. I suggested to you in the course of your representation that, if there are instances which ought to be brought to the notice of Government, you may make a list of those instances and hand them over to me and that list will be considered by Government.

One other general statement I have to make with reference to your representation and a few other representations that have been made is that strong language seems to have some of the characteristics of heady wine. It seems to go to the head of the person who uses it and it seems to make his craving for it greater. I have absolutely no objection to members stating defects strongly, but I have only to request members—not that they always infringe the rule—that there must be a kind of limit which their own good sense and sense of fair dealing must show them—a limit to which alone persons who are not in a position immediately to reply may be personally attacked.

With regard to several instances of what might appear to be irregularities to an outsider—by an outsider I mean one who is not aware of all the details of each of these cases—I may say that, if you are in possession of all facts, they might not appear to be irregular. When statements are made in regard to particular official acts, I request the members to remember that matter also. It seems to me—not that I want to shut out reference to specific instances of any grievances about any particular officer by the members of the Assembly, if there are any cases of irregularity, because publicity is good for everybody, publicity in itself is one remedy—it seems to me that before a particular official act is made the basis of a tirade against any particular officer, the proper procedure under the rules of practice for setting aside those irregularities should have been taken and if then he has been

found to be irregular or shown to be irregular, then of course a tirade will be right. These are some general considerations which struck me in the course of some of the representations.

You have tried very laudably to travel over the whole field of administration. I am sorry to say that you have not taken proper occasion to explain the suggestions that have been made. I am glad that those suggestions are here for the consideration of Government, but if you think that there is any useful addition to the suggestions or any explanation for them that you can make, I shall be glad to have them.

All your suggestions will be considered.

191. Responsible Government.

MR. K. N. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Kalkulam taluk, Group I*) said that Travancore Sovereigns were constitutional Rulers, the administration being carried on by the Dewan, the Sovereign seldom interfering. The Dewan was the practical Ruler. The Government had no fixed policy; it was changing with the change in the Dewanship.

The member said that the Government had no fixed policy of administration. For instance, the Education Department, which consumed 20·12 per cent. of the annual income of the State, served only to produce an army of young men fit only to be clerks. The policy of the Government in the matter should change. Illiteracy must be dispelled from the State. The youths who got out of colleges and schools should be fully equipped to earn their living. The department should work with some such fixed policy. Again, with regard to the Excise policy, the Government preached one thing and practised another. The Government had made some reduction in the number of arrack and toddy shops, but the actual quantity of arrack consumed during the year was far greater than in previous years, and the number of palm trees licensed for tapping was also much higher. The Agricultural Department was a quarter of a century old and yet it had not got out of the experimental stage. The agricultural policy of the Government should be to make the State self-sufficient in its agricultural produce. The Industries Department would also never out-grow its experimental stage. The department served no useful purpose and the sooner it was abolished the better. Again taking the Huzur Cutcherry, no work was done there. The files were piled up in large bundles. Letters addressed to the Dewan were not replied to; the petitions presented were treated with indifference and representations by responsible individuals on grave and important matters received little consideration at the hands of the Dewan. Solemn promises made by the Dewan to deputations were lightly treated. In the legislative Council, the Dewan President was an autocrat. He spent money as he pleased and framed laws as he fancied. He answered interpellations as it suited his whims.

All this was due to "one man rule". In all civilised countries, the Government was responsible to the people, and whenever the people